

SOUTH-WEST MINISTERIAL TRAINING COURSE

Protocol for the long placement *revised February 26 2009*

Introduction

The long placement provides an opportunity for students to learn from experienced ministers about the planning and practice of liturgical, educational and pastoral tasks. However, the placement is not simply about *doing* things (which may already have been done in the home church context), but about integrating skills with understanding, and developing skills of collaboration. The placement seeks to build on the skills of observation and analysis developed in the first year – this is the more important given that these skills are to be exercised while participating in the system being observed.

The core staff will review possibilities for placements. The staff tutor will then propose an appropriate location. The duration of the placement will vary, but it should be complete, and the report written and approved by the staff tutor, in time to be handed in with the MDMII portfolio at the last residential weekend.

The minimum time commitment is 60 hours.

The primary aims:

- that students apply past experience, and insights and skills gained during training, in observing and analysing a new church context
- that they take up, under supervision from the placement minister, some of the roles of an authorised minister, and then reflect on this orally and in written form.

Objectives¹:

The placement should aim to enable students:

- not simply to preach and lead an act of worship, but also to lead informal worship and study, and to collaborate with lay people in the preparation of worship
- not simply to sit in on a meeting of a Church committee or planning group, but to analyse (according to a format provided) what processes are involved in the working of that group
- to reflect on how mission is understood in the placement church, and how the faith is learned by different sorts of people
- to reflect on the nature and effectiveness of different sorts of pastoral visiting.

¹ This list of aims and objectives is drawn up for students whose future ministry will include a significant element of preaching and leading worship. Different arrangements will be made for candidates for the office of non-preaching deacon in the Methodist Church.

Learning Outcomes: the student's assessed work will permit assessment of the degree to which:

- the student has been able to prepare an effective sermon for a new context, to consider the experience of preaching and leading worship in that context, and to learn from the feedback received
- the student has been able to prepare and lead an informal meeting for study, and consider the possibilities for learning in that setting
- the student understands something of the processes operating in a group involved with the management of a church, and the possibilities for change in such a group
- the student understands something of the opportunities for and challenges of mission in the placement church's context, and the appropriateness (or not) of the church's mission strategy
- the student understands the benefits and difficulties of working collaboratively in the planning of worship
- the student makes connections between his/her theological understandings, the context of the placement, and the realities of ministerial work.

Responsibilities for the long placement

The student's staff tutor has overall responsibility for the placement, and the expectations on students and placement ministers are set out on the following pages. There is also a need to facilitate conduct of the placement. The *facilitator* will:

- a) sit in on the opening discussion between the placement minister and the student, and help the two to clarify what is expected by whom.
- b) discover half-way through the placement whether the student is approaching the placement appropriately and receiving the support (s)he needs. The student is responsible for phoning the facilitator at the half-way point to outline the progress of the placement. Both the student and the placement minister should be able to request a threeway meeting with the facilitator if they consider it appropriate.
- c) sit in on a debrief of the placement experience with both minister and student, and help the two to clarify what has been experienced and what has been achieved.

The facilitator needs to be someone who knows the student well. This will normally be the personal tutor. Where this is not possible the staff tutor will act as facilitator. If the personal tutor is involved, the contacts described above may be taken to constitute two of the six annual meetings scheduled for that element of the student's training.

Reporting on the long placement

The placement minister will write a report (on a form provided). Questions on the reporting form will contain factual questions about what was done and open-ended questions designed to encourage reflection on the ministerial effectiveness of the student.

If the personal tutor acts as facilitator, he/she will write a brief report on the student's response to the placement. This will be of the same character as the present annual report by the personal tutor.

The student will write a 2000-2500-word report on the placement, to accord with the learning outcomes listed above. The final version will form part of the MDMII portfolio. However, a draft report will be submitted to the relevant staff tutor within three weeks of the completion of the placement, as a check that the appropriate type of work has been done. The staff tutor will indicate to the student ways in which the report can be integrated with other learning in the preparation of the final written assignment. The staff tutor will also be able to take up with the student's placement minister any sensitive issues to which the draft report makes reference – such as interpersonal issues, or possible breaches of confidentiality. A copy of the final report should be sent to the placement minister, as a way of helping his/her own reflection on good practice.

The pages following list the expectations on students, placement ministers and facilitators.

APPENDIX I: STUDENTS TO BE MINISTERS IN SECULAR EMPLOYMENT, AND FOR THE OFFICE OF NON-PREACHING DEACON IN THE METHODIST CHURCH

The above objectives, procedures and learning outcomes would be modified for such students to take account of the different emphases of their proposed ministry. In particular candidates for the office of non-preaching deacon should have a placement focussing on pastoral service, and not containing a responsibility for preaching or leading public worship.

SOUTH-WEST MINISTERIAL TRAINING COURSE

EXPECTATIONS OF THE STUDENT ON LONG PLACEMENT

1. To meet with the placement minister and facilitator to set a schedule of activities consistent with the time available. The total time given to the placement should not be less than 60 hours². The activities scheduled should include:-
 - preaching at one Sunday service and receiving brief feedback from the congregation (5 hours - *illustrative timings based on a 60-hour placement*)
 - leading one main service and one informal act of worship and receiving brief feedback (3 hours)
 - planning an act of worship in collaboration with lay people (4 hours)
 - preparing and leading one informal meeting for study or discussion (4 hours)
 - attending and analysing two meetings of substantive church committees or councils such as the PCC or equivalent (6 hours)
 - accompanying the placement minister on different types of visiting, eg general pastoral care, pre and post funeral visits, visiting the housebound or the sick (6 hours)
 - undertaking some general visiting unaccompanied and discussing this with the placement minister (6 hours)
 - attending with the placement minister some significant place in the local community and discussing the appropriateness (or not) of the church's mission strategy (4 hours).
2. To keep a log (not for assessment) of activities carried out, observations made, and initial connections made with prior learning, this to form the basis of the report discussed below (3 hours)
3. To review progress with the placement minister at the half-way point in the placement
4. To telephone the facilitator at the half-way point to outline how the placement is unfolding
5. To review the placement formally with the placement minister and facilitator when the above activities have been completed (total planning and review time, 6 hours)
6. To draft a 2000-2500-word report (10 hours) on the placement which indicates what activities have been carried out, and indicates what has been learned in the following categories of assessed learning outcome:
 - the degree to which:
 - the student has been able to prepare an effective sermon in a new context, and to consider the experience of preaching and leading worship in that context (also the feedback received)
 - the student has been able to prepare and lead an informal meeting for study, and consider the possibilities for learning in that setting

² The period during which the placement is carried out will vary very much according to the student's circumstances. In the case of a student undertaking a short, intensive placement, there should be some contact with the church before the placement so that there is a period of at least four weeks during which the student has contact with the church and its context.

- ❑ the student understands something of the processes operating in a group involved with the management of a church, and the possibilities for change in such a group
 - ❑ the student understands something of the opportunities for and challenges of mission in the placement church's context, and the appropriateness (or not) of the church's mission strategy
 - ❑ the student understands the benefits and difficulties of working collaboratively in the planning of worship
 - ❑ the student is able to reflect on the nature and effectiveness of different sorts of pastoral visiting.
 - ❑ the student makes connections between his/her theological understandings, the context of the placement, and the realities of ministerial work.
7. To submit the draft report to the student's staff tutor within 3 weeks of the end of the placement, to discuss with the staff tutor the draft, to edit the report on the basis of that discussion, to send a copy of the edited version to the placement minister, and to include the edited version in the MDMII portfolio (3 hours).

SOUTH-WEST MINISTERIAL TRAINING COURSE

LONG PLACEMENT

EXPECTATIONS OF THE PLACEMENT MINISTER

1. To meet with the student and the facilitator to set a schedule of activities consistent with the time available. The total time given to the placement should not be less than 60 hours³. The activities that are scheduled should include the student:-
 - preaching at one Sunday service
 - preparing and leading one informal meeting for Bible study or discussion
 - leading one main service and one informal act of worship,
 - planning an act of worship in collaboration with lay people
 - attending and analysing two meetings of substantive church committees or councils such as the PCC or equivalent
 - accompanying the placement minister on different types of visiting, eg general pastoral care, pre and post funeral visits, visiting the housebound or the sick
 - undertaking some general visiting unaccompanied and discussing this with the placement minister
 - attending with the placement minister some significant place in the local community and discussing the church's understanding of its role and mission.
2. To review progress with the student informally at the half-way point in the placement and formally when the above activities have been completed. If it is considered helpful, the minister may request a three-way meeting with the facilitator present. If there are serious concerns about the student's conduct of the placement, the staff tutor should be contacted directly.
3. To attending a debriefing session with the student and placement facilitator and give oral feedback on the student's performance.
4. To write a report on the placement, on a proforma provided. The report will include specific responses as to activities carried out, and general impressions as to the student's ministerial effectiveness. **This report should be sent within three weeks of the end of the placement. It will be seen by the core staff only.**

³ The period during which the placement is carried out will vary very much according to the student's circumstances. In the case of a student undertaking a short, intensive placement, there should be some contact with the church before the placement so that there is a period of at least four weeks during which the student has contact with the church and its context.

SOUTH-WEST MINISTERIAL TRAINING COURSE

LONG PLACEMENT

EXPECTATIONS OF THE PLACEMENT FACILITATOR

1. To meet with the student and the placement minister to facilitate their setting of a schedule of activities consistent with the expectations of the Course and the time available.
2. To receive a progress report by phone-call from the student at the half-way point in the placement.
3. To facilitate a half-way-point meeting with the student and the placement minister if either should ask for this.
4. To contact the student's staff tutor in cases of concern about the outworking of the placement.
5. To facilitate the final debrief of the placement.
6. If the facilitator is the student's personal tutor, he/she is to write a brief report on the placement which gives the tutor's impression of how the student worked with the process of planning and carrying out the placement. This report will be seen by the core staff only.